532 I do not believe any foreign influence was exercised in the
322 conception of the idea. His group is absolutely original, and, as such, shows us to what lengths the sculptural talent of the Ba-Ronga can go. This group is now in the Neuchâtel Museum.

313 While statuettes are the most elaborate products of Native
532 sculpture, *canoes* (shene (Dj.) are the largest. I have already
322 mentioned the taboos connected with the cutting of the mahogany and nkwenga trees when used for this purpose (p. 19). Other trees, the mpfubu and the muhlu, can be cut without these precautions being taken.

IV. *Metallurgy.*

172 When and how did iron reach the Ba-Ronga ? Probably we
412 shall never be able to ascertain. Tradition has it that the primitive
316 inhabitants of Nondwane, the Honwana, who cooked elephants in order to tear them in pieces, had no iron implements. Some authorities tell us that the hoe in use in olden times was of an exceedingly hard wood, wrenched I know not how from a species of teak tree called *ntjhiba*. The Natives of these parts must have passed directly from the age of wood to that of iron. There was certainly a stone age, comparable to that of the lake dwellers, in Cape Colony, where a great quantity of silex and of polished stones have been found. I never heard of any such implements having been used by the Thongas, nor found within their territory. As regards the bronze age, they have known the use of copper for a long time, but it cannot be proved that they knew it before iron.

177 Iron and other metals seem to have been first introduced in
439 Delagoa Bay by the "Godji" traders and whale fishers, of whom
316 I shall shortly speak ; they are the first White visitors whom the Natives now remember. The Ba-Ronga used to exchange fowls and other domestic animals for hoes, brass bracelets, and copper brought by the strangers, and they had found out how to make copper wire by forging (fula) the pieces bought from the "Godji."

316 Later on wrecked boats provided Native smiths with iron to make
325 hoes, axes, etc. In certain villages there were regular forges,
412 (Matlharin, near Mbengelen Island, Matjolo etc.). The hoes
436 were in the well-known form of an ace of spades and were fixed into a wooden handle, as are also the axes, and battle axes (I. p. 453). But the principal supply of iron came from the Transvaal Mountains, especially from the Northern Zoutpansberg, where the Bveshas have practised the art of mining iron ore for an unknown period. These Sutho hoes have played a great part in the history of the Thonga tribe, having been extensively used as currency for lobolo purposes.

325 These Bveshas — the word is said to be a Thonga corruption of Venda — built their furnaces in ant-hills, as shown in the accompanying illustration supplied by M. H. Gros, near Iron Mountain, East of the Spelonken district. They excavated three holes under the furnace, and blew into them by means of bellows made of a skin, the air being expelled through an antelope horn. The ore, broken in small pieces and mixed with charcoal, was smelted, crushed, smelted a second time, crushed again and made into hoes and axes, etc. Who had taught the Vendas this art? Did they learn it from the Ma-Lemba, that curious tribe, half Semitic in its customs, which invaded the Northern Transvaal during the XVIIIth century? Nobody knows for certain. I am under the impression that this art is older than that, as the Lebombo Natives, who invaded the Nondwane in the XVIth century, seem to have possessed iron weapons. The origin of iron and the date of its introduction into South Africa is still a mystery.

326 Among the ornaments illustrated will be found a very pretty belt (No. 1).[1] It is the work of a young man named Philemon, living in the outskirts of Lourenço Marques, who employed his leisure moments in making objects of this description with twisted wires of iron, brass and copper, bent in festoons and [177] fastened with small tongues of metal. European influence is doubtless very marked in these belts, but still they possess a certain cachet of their own. Amongst the Zulus as in our tribe, large cups of various descriptions, including egg-cups, are

[1] [p. 101 -- Analyst]